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Food for Thought

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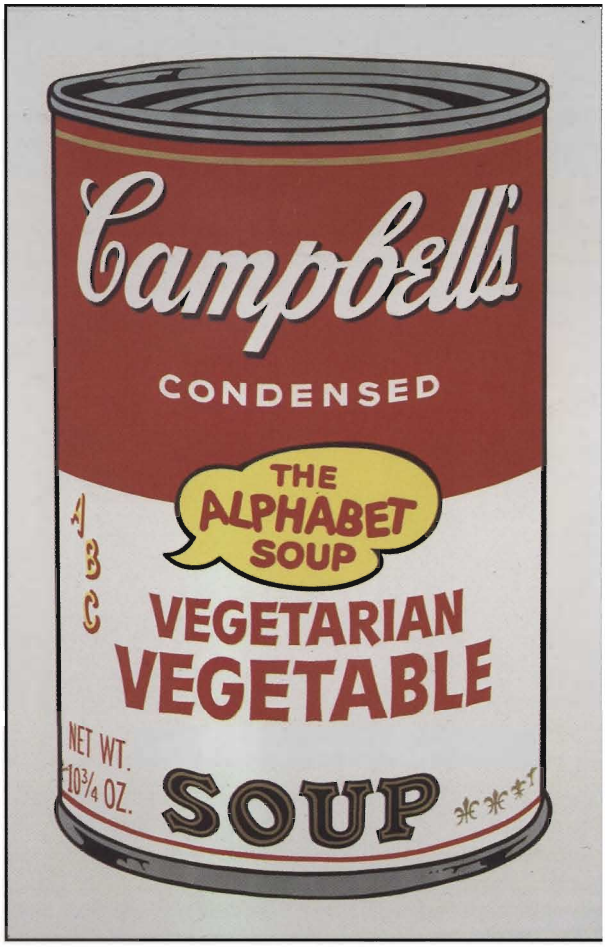
Food for Thought



Andy Warhol, VEGETARIAN VEGETABLE, 1969

Selections from the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
The Thirteenth Annual
Statewide Exhibition
1999-2000

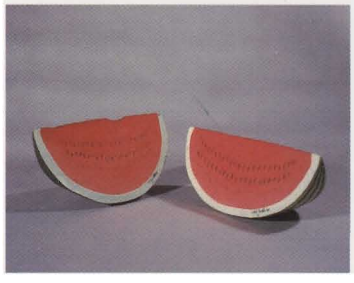
Jack Beal
1931-
TROUT, STATE II
1977, lithograph
25 x 30 1/2 in.
UNL-F.M. Hall Collection

James Cantrell
1935-
JONES' OLD KENTUCKY HOME RESTAURANT
1973, oil on canvas
12 1/8 x 18 in.
UNL-Gift of Mr. and Mrs. D. Seyler

Early in his career, Jack Beal made a commitment to realism though he was trained at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago to paint in Abstract Expressionist style. Realizing that his interest was not in abstraction, he began to move toward figuration and naturalism. Beal tries to paint things that he considers beautiful, lovely and uplifting, believing that art is a potentially powerful moral force.

UNL graduate James Cantrell finds joy in the creation of art. After several years of teaching in Nebraska, Cantrell moved to Kentucky where he made pottery, successfully marketing his own work. Returning to painting in 1971, Cantrell says, "I choose to work in a somewhat realistic fashion. This approach is the best method I have of communicating my feelings to those who view my work...I attempt to achieve work that reaches beyond simply a photo representation."

Ned Cartledge
1916-
WATERMELON
1980, painted wood
7 3/4 x 13 1/4 x 4 in.
UNL-Dale D. Brodkey Memorial

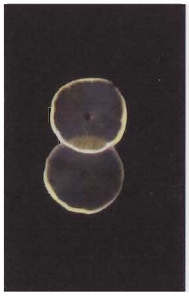


Marsden Hartley
1877-1943
STILL LIFE WITH FAN
c. 1912, oil on canvas
36 1/2 x 28 5/8 in.
NAA-Thomas C. Woods Memorial

A carver since boyhood, self-taught artist Ned Cartledge's whittled pieces reflect his incisive wit and critical intelligence. Though his work is often grouped with folk art, many of his relief carvings contain verbal and visual puns that make sharp commentaries on the human condition. Cartledge is described as a satirist and a moralist, who decries hypocrisy and insists on adherence to traditional American values.

Marsden Hartley is highly regarded as one of the finest of America's first generation modernists. Throughout his life he dealt with poverty, tragedy and constant struggles with conflicting styles of painting. In 1910, after seeing the work of Matisse, Picasso, and Cezanne, Hartley became convinced that the "new art" was based on still life. The influence of Cubism is evident in the flattened space and linear forms of *Still Life with Fan*.

Robert Heinecken
1931-
L IS FOR LEMON SLICES - 4
1971, hand-colored photogram
4 13/16 x 7 7/8 in.
NAA-Purchased with the aid of funds from the NEA



Hans Hofmann
1880-1966
FRUIT BOWL
1950, oil on canvas
29 7/8 x 38 in.
NAA Collection

Trained as a printmaker, Heinecken says he "just stumbled into trying photographs..." This hand-colored photogram shows the artist's utilization of the photographic process without the use of a camera. Slices of lemon have been placed on light-sensitive paper, then exposed to light, resulting in images that reveal the texture of the objects.

When Hans Hofmann came to America in 1930, he was already an experienced teacher and painter. In New York, he established a profoundly influential school, where he served as a primary link between modern art in Europe and Abstract Expressionism in this country. Cubist-inspired *Fruit Bowl* is the result of Hofmann's "construction" of a still-life arrangement in which the space between objects is as important as the solidity of the objects themselves.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden is pleased to present *Food for Thought*, the thirteenth annual Sheldon Statewide exhibition. Sheldon Statewide is a unique collaboration between the Sheldon Gallery, the Nebraska Art Association (a nonprofit volunteer membership organization dedicated to the advancement of the visual arts in Nebraska) and the efforts and cooperation of the many Nebraska communities that serve as exhibition venues. The mission of the Sheldon Gallery is the acquisition, exhibition, and interpretation of 19th-20th-century American art. Sheldon Gallery has achieved a national reputation for this collection. Each year twenty works from this collection are circulated throughout the state of Nebraska.

The 1999-2000 Sheldon Statewide exhibition focuses on a popular yet powerful subject for artist in the Western artistic tradition. *Food for Thought* assembles a diverse group of artists, working from diverse perspectives and with diverse intentions, who have chosen to represent food.

Food is the very stuff of life, it nourishes us, sustains us, even gives us pleasure. However, in the hands of artists, food is transformed aesthetically and imbued with added meaning and significance. The representation of food in the Western artistic tradition has served a variety of symbolic purposes. First and foremost is the representation of the material beauty of the world around us, a beauty that has intrigued and seduced artists for centuries. Second, some artists have represented this material beauty in order to emphasize its transient nature, thus serving to redirect attention from the temporal pleasures of this world for the presumably more enduring concern of one's soul.

In addition, contemporary artists have continued this tradition of depicting food for the purposes of glorifying the beauty of this world as well as utilizing that beauty to communicate symbolically something "spiritual" or "moral." With the triumph of American consumerism in the 1950s, many artists began to use food as a symbol of mass consumption, mass advertising, and capitalism that, to many social commentators, would lead to the depreciation of individuality and the spiritual.

It is certainly true that we, as human beings, do not live by bread alone. And for centuries artists have recognized this simple but profound truth. But it is also true that this "something more," this spirituality that sustains and nourishes us, can only be communicated through material means. For the artist, who desires to communicate this "something more" through the material means of paint, clay, or marble, it is not surprising that artists have been interested in the depiction of food, in the very life-giving substance that allows us to purse this "something more."

And certainly artists have identified food with their art. Both are material means--material necessities--through and by which we can pursue our spiritual calling. The artistic representation of food is a glorification of the physical beauty of this world while at the same time it is a recognition of the need for "something more," and it is this "something more" that makes us human.

Daniel A. Siedell
Interim Director/Curator

Edward Weston
1886-1958
PEPPER
1930, gelatin silver print
9 9/16 x 7 5/8 in.
UNL-F.M. Hall Collection

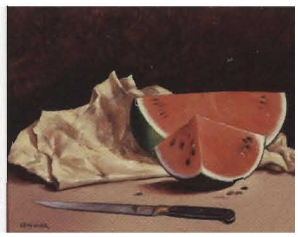
John Wilde
1919-
NIGHTSHADE
1956, oil on canvas
16 x 20 in.
NAA-Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Woods in memory of Mrs. Minnie Latta Ladd

Edward Weston, whose work singularly influenced the course of photography in the twentieth century, was one of the most daring and original artists of his generation. Weston's closeups of vegetables seem to glow from within, as his camera lens isolates a single perfect shape in a shallow space. This pure, precise image of a pepper appears to the viewer as a mode of abstraction.

For many years Professor of Art Emeritus John Wilde taught drawing at the University of Wisconsin. A superb draftsman, Wilde's work is based on meticulous realism; his representational style draws its inspiration from early Flemish and Italian Renaissance sources. The term "nightshade" refers to any of the large family of plants that includes red peppers, potatoes and the tomatoes depicted here.

Jasper Johns
1930-
BREAD
1969, lead relief with hand-coloring in oil paint and collage
23 x 17 in.
UNL-F.M. Hall Collection

The subject is a *trompe l'oeil* lead relief projecting from a fixed background. Jasper Johns, a major figure in the Pop Art movement of the 1960s, has chosen a familiar item, a lightly toasted slice of white head, to confront the viewer with the question, "What is 'real'?" His fascination with the ordinary, banal objects of our everyday culture includes such items as the United States flag and an archery target.



Robert Kensinger
1926-
WATERMELON ON PAPER
n.d., oil on masonite
11 x 14 in.
UNL-Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James Seacrest

With fully expressed realism (note the reflected image in the knife blade), California native Robert Kensiger employs a traditional still-life format to depict luscious ripe fruit resting on wrinkled wrapping paper. Watermelons appear three times in the *Food for Thought* exhibition. Look at the other works and then consider why this is such an appealing subject for artists.

Sister Mary Corita Kent
1918-1986
NO MAN IS A WATERMELON
1965, three-color serigraph
18 x 24 in.
UNL-F.M. Hall Collection

The artist known as Sister Corita, a nun and faculty member of the art department at the Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, concentrated her graphic work in serigraphy. Her distinctive style combines text with image, often using a selected quotation with splashes of color. The enigmatic work in this exhibition unites a poem by Gertrude Stein with bright bands of red and pink surrounding the thought-provoking title.

Walt Kuhn
1877-1949
APPLES IN WOODEN BOAT
1938, oil on canvas
25 x 30 in.
UNL-F.M. Hall Collection

Apples in Wooden Boat is one of seventeen carefully screened paintings the artist saved from his work in 1938. Throughout his career, Kuhn made many still-life paintings of fruit, with apples as a frequent subject. After years of artistic investigation, he selected the "Winesap" as his favorite, declaring it "the very apple which Eve offered Adam..."

Louis Lozowick
1892-1973
STILL LIFE
n.d., oil on canvas
20 x 16 in.
NAA-Nelle Cochrane Woods Memorial

This Russian-born artist became an eloquent spokesman for Machine Age America in the 1920s. His art is drawn from a variety of influences, including Cubism and Russian Constructivism. *Still Life* depicts familiar objects within a formal structure emphasizing line, color and form.

Will Mentor
1958-
THE THREE SISTERS
1997, lithograph, chine colle and screen
36 x 28 in.
UNL-Gift of Gallery Friends

Native Americans of the Iroquois tribe believed the "three sisters," corn, beans and squash, were given to them by their Creator. These plants as well as the notations, lists of names and other information indicate the artist's interest in organic gardening, and his belief in a holistic ecology of the mind as well as the world.

Claes Oldenburg
1929-
N.Y.C. PRETZEL
1994, silkscreen corrugated cardboard
6 1/2 x 6 1/2 x 5/8 in.
UNL Collection

In the 1960s artists derived imagery, such as this cardboard replica of the familiar pretzel, from the popular, mass-produced culture. Claes Oldenburg, who made these pretzels, is internationally known for numerous large public sculptures, such as *Batcolumn* in Chicago and *Clothespin* in Philadelphia. With his wife and collaborator, Coosje van Bruggen, he conceived the site-specific *Torn Notebook* sculpture installed on the UNL campus in 1996.

Mary Jane Peale
1827-1902
STILL LIFE: APPLES AND GRAPES
n.d., oil on canvas
16 x 22 1/2 in.
NAA-Nelle Cochrane Woods Memorial

This traditional tabletop still-life composition depicts fresh fruit--each morsel and object carefully painted with characteristic color and harmony. The artist, daughter of Rubens Peale and granddaughter of the famous eighteenth-century American painter, Charles Willson Peale, pursued a career as a Philadelphia portraitist before turning to still-life painting.

Charles Rain
1911-1985
VOTIVE CUP
1967, oil on panel
10 x 8 in.
UNL-Bequest of the artist

The artist, a graduate of Lincoln High School, Lincoln, Nebraska, studied at The Art Institute of Chicago where he learned to paint in an abstract style. His mature pursuit of classicism resulted from studying the work of the great masters while living in Europe. *Votive Cup,* a precisely rendered still life, conveys bizarre elements of surrealism in an incongruous juxtaposition.

Wayne Thiebaud
1920-
CANDY APPLES
1967, watercolor on paper
15 1/4 x 20 1/4 in.
UNL-Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Campbell

Isolated against the spare background, an arrangement of striped candy apples casts blue shadows. Through the use of familiar subjects, Wayne Thiebaud's uniquely American still lifes investigate basic formal concerns, focusing on composition, light (and shadow), color and scale. Thiebaud often explores the same subject in endless compositional variations.

Andy Warhol
1930-1987
VEGETARIAN VEGETABLE
1969, color silkscreen
34 1/2 x 23 in.
UNL-Gift of Carl and Jane Rohman through the Univ. of NE Foundation

Pop artist Andy Warhol turned ordinary objects from American culture into art. His Campbell's Soup can images, fashioned to look like the real thing and made to be reproduced, indicate his acute understanding of mass media and our consumer society. His work questions the traditional values of hand-made, unique art objects and the concept of originality.

Andrew John Henry Way
1826-1888
WILD GRAPES
n.d., oil on canvas
24 1/4 x 18 1/8 in.
UNL-Anonymous loan

During his career as Baltimore's leading still-life painter of the nineteenth century, Andrew John Henry Way specialized in painting grapes, fish, and not surprisingly, oysters that were indigenous to the area. Way, who was commended for his realistic representation of many varieties of grapes, commented that they offered "unparalleled attractions to the fruit-painter..."

Food for Thought
1999-2000 Sheldon Statewide Program Schedule

Chadron	*August 30-September 24, 1999, Memorial Hall Main Gallery* *Local Sponsor: Chadron State College*
North Platte	*September 26-October 22, 1999, The Mall* *Local Sponsors: NebraskaLand National Bank; North Plattle Telegraph; Ross Perry Motors and Crossroads Dodge-Cadillac, Oldsmobile, Dodge, Jeep and Eagle; United Nebraska Bank; Western Nebraska National Bank; First Federal Lincoln Bank*
Grand Island	*October 24-November 26, 1999, Grand Island Public Library* *Local Sponsors: Grand Island Public Schools; Home Federal; CARP*
McCook	*November 28, 1999-January 7, 2000, Museum of the High Plains* *Local Sponsor: McCook Arts Council*
Aurora	*January 9-February 4, 2000, Plainsman Museum* *Local Sponsor: Hamilton Community Foundation, Inc.*
Holdrege	*February 6-March 3, 2000, Holdrege Public Library* *Local Sponsors: Dr. & Mrs. Stuart Embury; Dr. & Mrs. Wayne Quincy; Dr. & Mrs. Doak Doolittle; First National Bank of Holdrege; Holdrege School Foundation; National Art Honor Society, Holdrege Chapter*
Beatrice	*March 5-March 31, 2000, Gage County Museum* *Local Sponsor: Beatrice National Bank & Trust*
Columbus	*April 2-May 5, 2000, Columbus Art Gallery* *Local Sponsors: Platte County Convention & Visitors Bureau; Columbus Public Schools; NU Attitude Sorority; Columbus Area Arts Council; Columbus Art Gallery*
Fremont	*May 7-June 2, 2000, Fremont Area Art Association* *Local Sponsor: Fremont Area Art Association*
Cozad	*June 4-July 15, 2000, Robert Henri Museum and Historical Walkway* *Local Sponsor: Friends of the Henri; Cozad Arts Council; Monroe Auto Equipment*
Hastings	*July 16-August 31, 2000, Hastings Museum* *Local Sponsor: The Hastings Museum*
York	*September 5-September 29, 2000, Cornerstone Bank* *Local Sponsor: Cornerstone Bank*
Norfolk	*October 1-October 27, 2000, Norfolk Art Center* *Local Sponsor: Norfolk Art Center*

Sheldon Statewide is supported in part by the Nebraska Art Association and through a donation by James and Rhonda Seacrest. The Nebraska Art Association is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the advancement of the visual arts in Nebraska through educational and enrichment opportunities. Nebraska Art Association programs are supported in part by a Basic Support Grant from the Nebraska Arts Council, a State agency. The Institute of Museum and Library Services, a Federal Agency that fosters innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning, supports the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery. Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden is one of only 750 out of more than 8,000 museums nationwide accredited by the American Association of Museums.